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Field programme

KEY FACTS

- At any one time, FAO manages over 2 000 field projects and programmes worth close to US\$900 million.
- More than 95 percent of FAO field projects and programmes are funded by voluntary contributions through different types of trust funds.
- In 2009-2010, more than US\$1.6 billion was mobilized for FAO development and emergency operations.
- Every year, more than 200 million people are affected by natural disasters worldwide. In 2010, this included floods in Pakistan, an earthquake in Haiti and drought in the Niger and the Horn of Africa.

Practical actions to fight hunger

FAO's activities in the field have a common denominator – they all deliver practical assistance to fight hunger. This can mean meeting an immediate need, such as restarting food production after a flood or other disaster, or it can mean taking action to prevent soil erosion in the long term. It can also mean helping a country mobilize resources for its priorities in the food and agriculture sector or put into action a national strategy for food security.

Scope of FAO's field activities

At any one time, FAO manages over 2 000 field projects and programmes worth close to US\$900 million. Funding comes from different sources. FAO itself is a contributor, but extrabudgetary funding from donors, financing institutions and international organizations is the driving force behind FAO's field programme.

FAO field activities cover a range of tasks, from controlling animal or plant diseases across whole countries or regions to renovation of village grain storage to providing policy advice.

The Organization has the expertise and experience needed to provide technical and operational support. Its technical staff

comprises agronomists, foresters, fisheries experts, engineers, nutritionists, economists, statisticians and sociologists. These experts are based at regional and subregional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Near East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and at FAO headquarters in Rome.

National institutions and NGOs are often closely involved in the implementation of both development and emergency projects. FAO implementation services range from recruitment and supervision of experts and consultants to procurement of goods and services to capacity development and policy assistance.

Policy assistance

FAO provides analysis of global changes and their implication at the national and regional level. It helps governments formulate and review their national policies and strategies in agriculture and rural development. Examples include supporting developing countries in understanding the implications of positions in trade negotiations and in implementing World Trade Organization agreements, advising governments on policy measures in response to the food price crisis or providing advice on prioritizing agriculture and rural development within existing development frameworks such as the Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Investment support

The FAO Investment Centre works in partnership with countries and public and private financial institutions to increase the efficiency and flow of external, domestic and private investments to agriculture and rural development. This means helping countries make agricultural and rural development investment strategies a greater part of their national and regional development plans.

The Investment Centre helps developing and in-transition countries invest with the long-term picture in mind, create synergies between investment programmes, build and strengthen national capacities and design specific investment programmes and projects intended to bring the greatest environmental, social and economic benefits to the lives of rural people. It assists countries in promoting their agricultural sector not only for purposes of economic development, but also to meet the health and nutrition needs of their citizens.



Senegalese technicians prepare a water filter to check for pesticide residues.

Capacity development

Developing the capacities of countries is a feature of nearly all FAO interventions, from strengthening a country's capacity to comply with food safety standards to training in pesticide management to establishing food information and early warning systems.

Farmer Field Schools, initially developed by FAO in Southeast Asia, are an alternative way of empowering small-scale farmers. The schools take a "living classroom" approach in which farmers study field ecosystems throughout the cropping year and learn to make informed decisions about such issues as pest and disease control.

Responding to emergencies

FAO's expertise in farming, livestock, fisheries and forestry is crucial in emergency response and rehabilitation efforts. Collaborating with many partners, including governments, other UN organizations and humanitarian groups, FAO's emergency activities include early warning systems, preparedness planning and urgent response measures, such as procuring seeds, livestock and tools, as well as repairing vital agricultural infrastructure. FAO designs its emergency interventions to help communities upgrade their skills and sustainably improve their farms. When the crisis ends, FAO seeks to phase out its emergency presence by strengthening the capacity of local NGOs and other relevant organizations.

National and regional programmes for food security

FAO's Special Programme for Food Security aims to reduce hunger and malnutrition. Initially, the programme targeted limited numbers of small-scale farmers, demonstrating low-cost technologies to boost food production and incomes of poor farming families. The success of the Special Programme has led FAO to support governments in creating national programmes for food security to help many more farmers. Governments bolster the effectiveness of the programmes with policies and investments to improve market access and provide direct

access to food for those too poor to produce or acquire it by themselves.

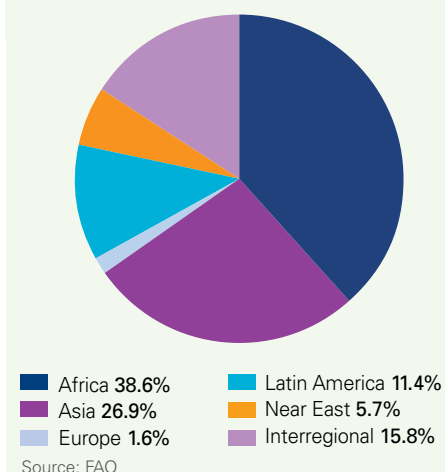
FAO also works closely with regional economic integration organizations to develop regional programmes for food security to promote integration and agricultural development among neighbouring countries. One key feature of these programmes is South-South cooperation. Agricultural technicians from more advanced developing countries work in less advanced countries, sharing their expertise.

Decentralized Cooperation Programme

Increasingly regions, cities and local institutions in developed countries are reaching out to their counterparts in poorer countries to help tackle poverty and food insecurity. The FAO Decentralized Cooperation Programme was launched in 2002 to promote participation of non-state actors in the

development process and to strengthen local government institutions with the aim of addressing hunger and malnutrition. Direct city-to-city or region-to-region partnerships are promoted with FAO acting both as a catalyst and provider of technical and operational support.

FAO field programme by region, 2010



The beekeeping sector in Tajikistan benefits from an FAO project enhancing animal health.